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YMCA

Young Men's Christian Association of Montreal

FOR RELEASE
MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 1969
AFTER 12:45 p.m.

YMCA FLAG RAISED AT PVM

Some of the ways the Montreal YMCA positively influences the lives of people--especially youth--were outlined Monday by W.N. Hall, President of the Association, at special observances to help mark National YMCA Week.

As the YMCA flag was raised over the Plaza at Place Ville Marie, he estimated that more than 4,000,000 people from all over North America would be participating in similar ceremonies during the week ending January 26, 1969.

He observed, however, that, because the first YMCA in North America was founded in Montreal, 117 years ago, National YMCA Week has special significance here.

In tracing the Y's history, he noted that, almost from the outset, its members went outside to acquire first-hand insight into human problems. They quickly learned that strong idealism, warm concern and a sincere desire to help were not by themselves sufficient.

As the movement evolved and matured, its range of concerns spread to encompass the social and physical needs of people.

"The characteristics which are its greatest strength

today began to emerge. Perhaps the most significant of these is the ability to remain relevant. For well over a century, this has enabled the YMCA to keep in step with the times by identifying cor-temporary problems and participating on a front-line basis in the development of answers."

Continuing education courses came later. They started by the Y offering night courses to enable people who had been deprived of schooling to take public and high school education at night. Now, they stress self development and the expansion of the individual's capacity, whether it is capacity for pleasure or capacity to adjust to social and technological change.

"Today, in Greater Montreal, the principal YMCA emphases are on character development and leadership training, on preparation of pre-teens for adolescence and teenagers for maturity, on the search for ways to bridge the generation gap and, on the search for solutions to contemporary social and community problems."

"New ways are being sought to help clarify and strengthen family relationships. More programs are being developed to foster communication and co-operation between Quebec's two main language groups."

"At the same time, thousands of youngsters are each year provided with experiences that will enjoyably promote all-round development and become treasured memories in later years."--30--

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January 16, 1969.